

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A polymer composition for peroxide bleaching of a cellulosic fiber material, said composition being in the form of a stable aqueous polymer solution obtained by contacting an aqueous medium of a first polymer (A) comprising a partly or totally acidic homopolymer of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid or maleic acid, or a copolymer of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with an unsaturated dicarboxylic acid, with a second polymer (B) comprising a polylactone of a poly-alpha-hydroxyacrylic acid in solid form or as a moist powder or as a slurry, said polymer solution having a pH of at most 5.

2. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the polymer solution has a pH of between 2 and 5.

3. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 or 2 wherein the first polymer (A) comprises a raw polymer obtained from the homopolymerization of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid or maleic acid or from the copolymerization of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with an unsaturated dicarboxylic acid, said raw polymer having an acidic pH of at most 5.

4. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the first polymer (A) has a molecular weight of at least 4000.

5. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the second polymer (B) has a molecular weight of at least 5,000.

6. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the first polymer (A) comprises a copolymer of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with maleic acid, wherein the molar ratio of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid to maleic acid is from 80:20 to 20:80.

7. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the share of the second polymer (B) is from 1 to 50% by weight of the total amount of the first and second polymers (A) and (B).

8. (Currently Amended) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the concentration of the first and second polymers (A) and (B) in the polymer solution is at least 10%, ~~preferably at least 15% and more preferably at least 20% by weight.~~

Claims 9-14 (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the polymer solution has a pH of between 3 and 4.5

16. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the first polymer (A) has a molecular weight of at least 10,000.

17. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the first polymer (A) has a molecular weight of at least 30,000.

18. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the second polymer (B) has a molecular weight of at least 10,000.

19. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the second polymer (B) has a molecular weight of at least 15,000.

20. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the concentration of the first and second polymers (A) and (B) in the polymer solution is at least 15% by weight.

21. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the concentration of the first and second polymers (A) and (B) in the polymer solution is at least 20% by weight.

22. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the concentration of the first and second polymers (A) and (B) in the polymer solution is at least 10% by weight.

23. (Previously Presented) The polymer composition of claim 1 wherein the first polymer (A) comprises a copolymer of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with maleic acid, wherein the molar ratio of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid to maleic acid is from 70:30 to 50:50.